

VZCZCXYZ0003  
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHEK #0120 0361211  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 051211Z FEB 07  
FM AMEMBASSY BISHKEK  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8921  
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 1932  
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 0007  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 0204

UNCLAS BISHKEK 000120

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SCA/CEN (GEHRENBECK), OES/ENV (FINMAN)  
NAIROBI PASS TO UNEP CONFERENCE DELEGATES  
NEW DELHI HOLD/PASS TO PUTNAM

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EMIN](#) [SENV](#) [KG](#)  
SUBJECT: KYRGYZ REPLY TO MERCURY MINING QUERY

REF: 06 STATE 202028

1. In response to an Embassy inquiry into official Kyrgyz attitudes to controls on mercury production, the Kyrgyz MFA responded via Diplomatic Note 011-14/79 dated January 25, 2007 with answers to five questions derived from reftel. The translated questions and answers are repeated below:

A) Does Kyrgyzstan support the concept of voluntary partnerships or a binding treaty to manage mercury?

The Kyrgyz Republic recognizes the serious threat posed by mercury production to human health and the environment, but at the same time, Kyrgyzstan cannot refuse the production and prefers voluntary partnership to legally binding treaties.

B) Are there any current or future plans to reduce or eliminate mercury production and/or consumption in Kyrgyzstan? If so, when would these changes take place and in what quantity?

The production volumes depend on market demand for the product. There is no simple answer to this question at the moment, because the demand always fluctuates depending on the market condition. However, according to statistical data, mercury output has been continuously decreasing since 2001. The main consumers of mercury are the USA, European countries and China. The factory will have no alternative to decreasing output if the world demand for mercury goes down.

C) How would Kyrgyzstan be affected by a global prohibition on mercury exports?

A global prohibition on mercury exports can have only negative impact on Kyrgyzstan at the moment. The town of Khaydarkan, which completely depends on the mercury factory, can lose its main, if not its only, employer and taxpayer. The town may also start experiencing problems with natural gas and electricity supplies, since the factory pays for maintenance of natural gas and electricity networks. The mercury factory provides the majority of jobs in Khaydarkan, therefore, reduction or suspension of production can make the town's survival impossible and turn it into a hotbed of social tension.

D) Would Kyrgyzstan support the establishment of a global mercury reduction goal? This would be a non-binding resolution setting targets and timeframes for mercury use reduction.

Based on the position of health and environment safety,

Kyrgyzstan may consider the issue of supporting this call. However, under the existing situation, it is possible only if funds for reorientation of the Khaydarkan factory become available, because the town cannot survive without the factory.

E) Would Kyrgyzstan support a global phase-out of primary mining of mercury?

As it was written above, Kyrgyzstan may consider the issue only if funds for reorientation of the Khaydarkan factory are attracted. According to experts, the factory requires more than 100 million USD for reorientation. Being one of the leading mercury producers in the world and considering the demand for mercury, the Kyrgyz Republic cannot refuse mercury production in the near future.

12. Embassy will relay any additional feedback septel.  
LITZENBERGER